Abstract

The present paper reports a longitudinal study of the psychological antecedents for, and outcomes of, collective action for a community sample of activists. At Time 1, activist identification influenced intentions to engage in collective action behaviours protesting the Iraq war, both directly and indirectly via perceptions of the efficacy of these behaviours for achieving group goals, as well as perceptions of individual-level benefits. At Time 2, identification was associated with differences in the dimensions on which the movement's success was evaluated. In the context of the movement's failure to achieve its stated objectives of troop withdrawal, those with strong activist identity placed less importance on influencing government decision-making. The implications are discussed in terms of models of collective action and social identity, focusing on a dynamic model which relates identification with a group to evaluations of instrumentality at a group and individual level; and to beliefs about strategic responses to achieve group goals.

KEYWORDS: collective action; social identity; group norms; efficacy; cost-benefit calculations.

If it matters for the group then it matters to me:
Collective action outcomes for seasoned activists

In the aftermath of September 11 and the West's subsequent 'War on Terror' much of the world has been on the march. People have been marching to war and marching for peace with equal measures of conviction. It is therefore not surprising that in recent years we see a resurgent interest in questions about what motivates people in these collective pursuits—particularly when in the eyes of many, so much may be lost or indeed, so little gained. It is perhaps also not surprising—although in light of social psychological theorizing, disappointing—that in much of the literature the answers subtly invoke the emotionality of the individual who spurns ‘rational‘ personal self-interest for the sake of the group. Nowhere is this more apparent than in terrorism research and social commentary that attempts to explain the suicide bomber (e.g., Richardson, 2006). Although individuals so committed to their cause that they will sacrifice their own lives are extreme examples of collective actors, analyses of suicide bombers resonate with the representations of political activists as either nobly altruistic or mad.

In this paper we are interested in those whom Simon and Klandermans (2001) describe as having a politicized identity. By this we mean people who through their activism in social movements we would expect to have taken on the constituent political understandings of the movement; and to enjoy a sense of the possibility and normative requirement to act collectively for social change. More particularly, we are interested in how current social-psychological research looking at the relationship between politicised

identity and collective action models the role of instrumental considerations (both group and individual). We begin by reviewing current theorising and research concerning collective action participation and the consequences of identity processes for instrumental motivation. We then present a two phase study with peace activists with two very simple aims. The first aim was to demonstrate the importance of interlinking group and individual-level identity processes in our models rather than treating them as separate. Our concern is that through the modelling of separate processes we may implicitly reinforce a representation of political activists as heroically or irrationally (depending on one's point of view) non-instrumental and inured to self-interest. The second related goal was to demonstrate the importance of not presupposing the normative goals that activists will consider worthy of their attention when evaluating the success or otherwise of their political actions. Our concern here is again that by inadvertently selecting the wrong goals, researchers increase the danger of representing political activists as unconcerned about the success or otherwise of their efforts.

Identity and instrumental decision-making as separate processes

Over the last 20 years the social identity theoretical perspective (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell et al., 1987), has succeeded in informing much of the research on participation in collective action—specifically research looking at who will participate, under what circumstances, and why? To understand its contribution, particularly to the understanding of instrumental motives, it is perhaps helpful to reflect on the prominent theoretical paradigm which it has challenged and refined. Foremost is Klandermans (1984, 1997) value-expectancy theory wherein participation was understood

in part as a function of people's assessments of the importance and likelihood of achieving collective goals and of experiencing personal costs and benefits associated with collective action. There is considerable evidence for this 'rational actor' approach, including from research pointing to the importance of group efficacy beliefs (Bandura, 1995; Brett & Goldberg, 1979; Klandermans, 1997), personal-cost-benefit calculations (e.g., Batstone, Boraston, & Frenkel, 1978; Klandermans, 1997; Olson, 1968), and barriers to participation (Klandermans & Oegma, 1987; Oegma & Klandermans, 1994). In seeming defiance of reason, there is also ample evidence for collective action occurring despite actors' scepticism about the likelihood of achieving collective goals and in the face of considerable personal costs. Two examples from this period illustrate the conundrum. Tyler and McGraw's (1983) study of anti-nuclear activists found that many of these activists held out little expectation of actually being able to prevent war; what appeared to matter most was a sense of moral obligation to make an effort. And in the 12-month British miners' strike of 1984 to 1985, many long-term strikers had very pessimistic estimations of their collective ability to achieve the goals of the strike, and yet despite this, were prepared to make substantial personal sacrifices (Winterton & Winterton, 1989; see also Blackwood, Lafferty, Duck, & Terry, 2003; Bliuc, McGarty, Reynolds, & Muntele, 2007; Cocking & Drury, 2004; Deaux, Reid, Martin, & Bikmen, 2006; Veenstra & Haslam, 2000).

The social identity approach (Tajfel & Turner, 1979; Turner et al, 1987) was used to solve this conundrum by specifying separate psychological processes depending on whether social (group) or personal identities are activated (e.g., Kelly & Breinlinger, 1996; Klandermans, 2000; Simon et al., 1998). Social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) specifies that when valued social identities are contextually salient, they provide a guide to

how we think and act in the world. A process of self-categorization (Turner, et al, 1987) is proposed to result in: (a) the perception of shared interests with in-group members leading to greater intragroup cooperation, and (b) the assimilation of individuals to the group prototype, leading them to think and act in terms of group norms rather than in terms of unique properties of the self. From this perspective, solidaristic action in the face of certain defeat is a consequence of self-categorizing with a group committed to the action. A more calculative, instrumental approach is associated with people acting according to personal identity concerns (although some argue that by definition this does not constitute collective action: see Wright 2009).

What has ensued over the last twenty years is research that challenges the individual-level instrumentalism behind 'rational actor' models, by looking at more symbolic social identity-related motives for collective action: e.g., the urge to express intergroup emotions such as anger or moral outrage (e.g., Iyer et al., 2007; Leach et al., 2007; van Zomeren et al., 2004, 2007), express the group identity directly by enacting its normative beliefs and emotions (e.g., Stürmer & Simon, 2005; Simon & Klandermans, 2001, Thomas et al, 2009); or voice perceptions that an intergroup relationship is illegitimate (e.g., Wright & Tropp, 2002). Although explicitly rejecting the suggestion that such motives are 'irrational' or even non-instrumental—rather, they are rational and instrumental at a group level—the focus of some of this research has been to differentiate when and for whom these symbolic motives will prevail over instrumental motives (e.g., group efficacy, personal costs and benefits, problem-solving). This differentiation has been achieved either through comparing high and low identifiers with social categories or movements, or through manipulating identity salience.

There is now a substantial body of evidence for strength or salience of social identity being associated with identity-related motives overwhelming instrumental considerations at both the group (e.g., group efficacy) or individual (e.g., cost-benefit) levels (e.g., Sturmer & Simon, 2004, 2005, 2009; Van Zomeren et al., 2008). New research models have been put forward which address the relationship between group identity, instrumental-beliefs (including collective efficacy and personal cost-benefits), and collective action (see Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008 for a meta-analysis). In relation to politicized identity, the clearest expression of this emerges from research by Simon and colleagues (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001; Stürmer & Simon, 2004, 2005, 2009; Stürmer et al., 2008) looking at the 'unique' contribution of politicized identity. Based on research conducted in a variety of social movement contexts including the older people's movement and the gay movement in Germany and the United States, they have proposed a dual-pathway model wherein identity—particularly politicized identity—predicts collective action independently of collective and reward motives (capturing group efficacy and personal cost-benefits). Importantly, these motives are explicitly assigned to reflect group and individual-level psychological processes respectively.

This specification of a dual-process model of collective action in part reflects an emphasis in the empirical research on predicting who will and who will not participate in collective action. As such it presents a rather static and mechanistic understanding of social identity and is at odds with research--also informed by the social identity perspective--that looks at how people come to be politicized through collective action participation and what it means to have a politicized identity. Of note, one of the key messages of Simon and Klanderman's (2001) own influential paper is the superiority of a politicized identity in

fulfilling the psychological agency function: through political struggle individuals achieve a sense of themselves as being collectively agentic. Although not directly analogous with group-efficacy and individual-level cost-benefit analyses, this would suggest at least some covariation, and indeed correlations reported by Simon and colleagues (e.g., Simon et al., 1998; Sturmer & Simon, 2009) confirm this. The observed inter-relationships among identity and instrumental group and individual perceptions sit more comfortably with Mummendey's (1998) analysis, and with Reicher and colleagues (Drury & Reicher, 2005; Reicher, 1987, 2001, 2004) focus on the strategic mobilization of social identities to empower individuals who would otherwise be relatively powerless. Following on from this, Van Zomeren and colleagues (2008) propose a social identity model of collective action (SIMCA) where in keeping with this more dynamic understanding of social identity as empowering, social identity predicts collective action directly as well as indirectly through group efficacy.

Identity transforms the criterion for decision-making

Social identity theory has made a vital contribution to our understanding of collective action by challenging individualist rational actor models and putting group processes at the centre. This, however, has sometimes come at a cost in-so-much as it has been achieved by treating personal and social identity as opposites: when one is activated the other is deactivated or rendered silent. In recent years, this interpretation of social identity theory has come under fire—although Tajfel distinguished between personal and social identities, the intention was not to treat them as fundamentally opposed (see Postmes & Jetten, 2006 for an overview of this critique). The dynamism and fluidity of social

identity processes is clearly observed in a number of ethnographic accounts of collective action events: a demonstration at a city council meeting (Drury & Reicher, 1999), the 1990 Poll Tax riot (Stott & Drury, 2000; Stott & Reicher, 1998), and an anti-road occupation and mass eviction (Drury et al., 2005: see also Bliuc et al., 2007). For our purposes, there are two observations from this research and its interpretation that are instructive. The first is the observation that what participants see as positive outcomes of collective action, are not necessarily those things that we as casual onlookers might assume. Participants in these struggles are described as undergoing a transformation where their sense of what matters reflects the emergent group-based values and goals of the protest. Thus, for instance, in a context where the police are seen to act with undue force, standing firm against oppressive police brutality may be just as important as the ostensible goals of protecting a rainforest or stopping a war. Consistent with this, cross-sectional data from a study of a peace rally (Hornsey et al, 2006) found that only non-activists' intentions to attend future actions were linked to the perceived efficacy of the rally in achieving the publicly articulated objective of *influencing decision-makers*. In contrast, more seasoned activists' intentions were linked to perceptions of the rally's efficacy in *building a long term oppositional movement.*

The second observation from this earlier ethnographic research is the fluidity participants show in the way that identity is construed, which belies the very rigid separation between individual and group processes that persists in some modelling of collective action. This has consequences for how we look at individual-level benefits. Perhaps reflecting an emphasis on group-processes, the individual-level costs and benefits to action have been less of a focus in social psychological research. But, where looked at they are typically operationalised as the personal sacrifices people make in terms of time,

resources, and persecution, and the gains in terms of friendship, access to networks, and meaningful activity. As discussed above, because these are experienced at the personal level, dual-process models predict that their effects will be independent of social identity (and indeed group-based efficacy beliefs: van Zomeren et al, 2008). Where the costs to the individual outweigh the benefits, and so it is not in the individual's self-interest to act, social identity concerns are required to 'overwhelm' these considerations.

There are two reasons why we question this understanding, at least for those who have a politicized identity. Our first reason is that while the individual may bear certain costs, in the context of their collective action where they are physically positioned with others, they may come to know that their personal sacrifices are also a shared and normatively valued experience (Louis, 2009; Swaab, Postmes, van Beest, & Spears, 2007). Accordingly, personal sacrifices in the interests of the group's goals may take on a very different meaning and indeed be a source of affirmation and pride for the individual (Louis, Taylor, & Neil, 2004). Thus, just as there is a danger in our presupposing what does and does not count as the collective goals for collective action against which evaluations of instrumentality or efficacy will be measured, so too we can not presuppose what will constitute self-interest for the individual. This latter point is reflected in the model of *agentic normative influence* (Louis, 2009; Louis, in press), where cost-benefit calculations are treated as occurring at both an individual and group level—which costs and benefits people pay attention to and how they are valued is determined by contextually salient social identities (see also Packer, 2008). For instance, where a context such as threat renders one’s group membership salient, even the ultimate sacrifice of one’s life might be subjectively experienced as personally beneficial, where it is a normatively valued response that is

beneficial to the group and its goals (Einwohner, 2007; Louis et al., 2004; Louis, 2009). The same argument has been made in other recent models of collective action, where instrumental (as well as more intangible social motives) are shaped by group identities and norms (e.g., van Zomeren et al., 2004, 2007, 2008; Thomas, McGarty, & Mavor, 2009).

Our second reason is that collective empowerment through collective action may have far-reaching consequences for the individual's personal sense of agency and so their orientation to and experience of costs and benefits. That is, through the agency of the group, an individual can come to see themselves as also personally more agentic. In support of this argument, Drury and Reicher (2009) report evidence for enduring effects of collective action on people's “relationships with the police, their partners, (and) their future career plans” (p.14). Lending further support to this argument, Tropp and Brown (2004) report evidence for a relationship between identifying as a woman and participating in collective action being mediated by the sense that involvement in women's issues had contributed to self-enhancement (e.g., self-esteem and importance: see also Gecas, 2000; Owens & Aronson, 2000; Snyder & Omoto, 2001 for research on the self-enhancement motive).

In accordance with Mummendey et al (1999), and with Reicher and colleague's (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2000, 2005; Reicher, 2001, 2004) argument that identity serves to empower individuals to achieve their collective goals, we aruge that group identification should facilitate group efficacy beliefs—particularly when what we are discussing is a politicized identity. This also fits with Zomeren and colleagues' conceptualisation of the relationship within their SIMCA model (2008). Thus, the effects of identity on collective action should be mediated by group-based perceptions of efficacy. We take this one step

further to argue for a reconceptualisation of personal costs and benefits; specifically that the meaning and evaluation of these too change. Although a political activist may perceive that there are personal costs in terms of time, resources, and even their life, these are costs that are shared by others with whom they act in solidarity and they are validated as the sacrifices that signify their commitment. Moreover, in accordance with Drury, the agency that comes with a politicized identity may have consequences for people's sense of personal agency and so their ability to deal with costs.

In summary, rather than it being the case that purely group level variables drive decisions in collective action contexts, when individuals identify with groups, they derive their perceptions of the outcomes of collective action for themselves as individuals in part *from* their perceptions of the outcomes of the action for the group. In terms of those who are highly politicized, the two may be indistinguishable, where the corrollorary of consciousness raising rendering the personal political, is that the political also becomes personal. Although the theoretical basis for this is well developed, the empirical analyses are all too often missing in our models. In part, the problem may be an artefact of our analytical approaches--the common practice of regressing collective action intentions on identification alongside group and individual-level variables under-estimates the role of identification when only the direct effect is interpreted. We argue that although separate paths may be observed, these direct paths may be misleading to the extent that inter-correlations among the independent variables reflect substantive, meaningful relationships which impact on the dependent measures. That is, we propose that understanding the role of group identities on decision-making requires attention to its indirect effects via both

group and individual processes (see also Beaton & Deveau, 2005; Louis et al., 2003; cf., Stürmer et al., 2008).

Present research

The present research springs from the above insights, drawn mainly from qualitative data, about the dynamic processes through which identity both transforms and is transformed by our political experiences in context. Although participation in collective action has been shown to shape perceptions of the collective action event, the empirical evidence has hitherto been provided primarily in the form of case studies (e.g., Luders, 2006), or participant observation and retrospective interviews (e.g., Drury & Reicher, 2000, 2005; Drury et al., 2005). Our research involved a longitudinal, community based survey of Australians who self-identified as peace activists in opposition to Australia's participation in the war in Iraq. The study was conducted in a political context where a broad and loose coalition of groups was campaigning under a 'peace banner', for the withdrawal of troops from Iraq. Across the course of the study, the conservative government of the day remained intransigent in its commitment to the 'Coalition of the Willing' and it seemed unlikely that the stated goal of troop withdrawal could be achieved without a change of government.

We investigate two inter-related aspects of the relationship between an activist identity and collective action intentions, behaviour, and evaluation. First we test the proposition that strength of enduring identification with an activist group produces collective action intentions (and behaviour), in part via both group-level and individual-level expectations of the likely outcomes of the action. Specifically, we make the following predictions.

H1a. Strength of identification with an activist group will influence collective action intentions via the perception that the action will be effective in achieving group goals, and this in turn will have an effect via the perception that the action will be of benefit to the individual. These predicted effects are in addition to the direct effects of identity and group-efficacy beliefs on the one hand, and individual cost-benefit calculations on the other, that are widely reported in the literature as providing evidence for dual pathway explanations.

H1b. Moreover, this model will provide a better fit to the data than two alternative models. We consider as alternatives the *independence model* where activist identity, group efficacy, and personal benefits provide separate paths to collective action intentions and behaviour, and a model where the path from activist identity to collective action intentions is partially mediated by group efficacy, but remains separate from the path specifed for personal benefits. This latter model allows identity-based perceptions of group efficacy, as in the SIMCA model, but quarantines personal costs and benefits as unrelated to group-level variables.

Insert Figures 1 – 3 here.

All too often we may presuppose that the goals of collective action are those 'end' goals encapsulated in social movement chants or slogans (e.g., 'smash capitalism'; 'end the war'; 'save the koala'). According to this criterion most collective actions fail most of the time. Accordingly, we turn to the apparent paradox presented by political groups' persistence in the face of overwhelming odds and indeed frequent failure to achieve their stated political objectives. If, as we have argued above, identification as an activist does not

render us less concerned about likely success, can we at the very least demonstrate that there might be different dimensions of success that are relevant? Specifically we would expect that those more strongly identified as an activist might be motivated by goals that go beyond simply achieving the stated short-term aims of an action (Hornsey et al., 2006). We expect our T2 sample of participants to have strong activist identity; certainly sufficient to participate in two collective actions. Nonetheless we hypothesised an interaction between strength of identification and the dimensions of success on which past collective action is evaluated. Specifically:

H2a. In their evaluation of the action having achieved the peace movement's overall goal, those less identified as activists are expected to attend more than high activist identifiers to evidence of success in influencing government (the stated objective of the action).

H2b. The opposite is expected to be the case in respect of mobilizing opposition, with high identifiers predicted to weight this more heavily than lower identifiers in their evaluation of the peace movement's overall success.

Method

Procedure and participants

Activists were recruited to participate in an on-line survey through snowball sampling. This involved disseminating the survey through e-lists for Australian peace groups, and from there, speaking at activist group meetings and relying on word of mouth. To satisfy the requirement that participants had some level of peace activist identification, only those who had performed at least one pro-peace political action in the last month were retained (N=155). The sample ranged in age from 16 to 75 (with a median of 35) and

comprised 62% women. Participants were disproportionately educated (93% having some form of tertiary education), and tended to support the minor Australian political parties (Green [63%] or Democrat [19%]) over the two main political parties (Liberal-National coalition [1%] and Australian Labor Party [9%]). Participants were asked to list any peace activist groups of which they were a member. Sixty-two percent of participants nominated at least one, and there were a total of 45 peace activist groups represented in the sample. These included umbrella organizations such as the Queensland, Victorian, and ACT Peace Networks, as well as groups such as Amnesty International, Coalition Against War, Just Peace, Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, and local (neighbourhood) groups.

A subsample of participants (n=71) who had indicated willingness to participate in future research completed the Time 2 survey, one month later. Compared with those who did not respond at T2, these participants had stronger T1 activist identities, χ^2 (153) = 2.03, p = .045. There were no significant differences in demographic characteristics.

Measures[1]

At Time 1, participants completed a survey measuring activist identity, perceptions of the benefits of collective action behaviours for the individual, perceptions of the efficacy of these same collective action behaviours for achieving overall group goals, and intentions to engage in future collective action. At Time 2, activist identity was again measured, in addition to four variables examining self-reported behaviour over the previous month and evaluations of the peace movement’s success overall and on two more specific dimensions (i.e., influencing the government and mobilizing supporters).

Identification. A three-item scale with two positive items (“I think of myself as an activist”; “I am committed to being an activist”) and one reverse-scored item (“Being an activist is NOT important to who I am”) assessed Time 1 and Time 2 activist identity (αs=.70, 73). These items capture Leach and colleague's (2008) centrality and solidarity components of identity, which are considered to be particularly important for political action. Items were measured on Likert scales from 1, *Strongly Disagree*, to 5, *Strongly Agree* and averaged so that higher scores measured stronger activist identity.

Time 1 benefits to the individual. Participants were asked to rate five collective action behaviours selected through pilot testing (i.e., attending a rally, signing a petition, donating money, volunteering, and attending a meeting) in terms of their consequences for the individual (e.g., “Think about if you attended a pro-peace rally in the next month. On a concrete level, do you expect there would be concrete costs versus benefits for you personally?”). Items were rated on a scale ranging from 1, *Mostly costs,* through 4, *Mix of costs & benefits*, to 7, *Mostly benefits* and were averaged such that higher scores reflected more perceived benefits of pro-peace action for the individual, α=.85.

Time 1 group efficacy. Participants were then asked to rate the potential efficacy of each of these five collective action behaviours in achieving the goals of the peace movement (e.g., “In the next month, if you attended a rally how effective do you think this would be in achieving the goals of the peace movement?”). Responses on scales from 1, *Not at all effective*, to 7, *Very effective*, were averaged to create an index of group efficacy, α=.90.

To ensure that these three composite variables were empirically distinguishable and that the hypothesised relationships between them could not be attributed to meaurement

issues, all component items were subjected to a principal components analysis using oblimin rotation. Based on eigenvalues greater than 1, and confirmed by a scree plot, a three-factor solution was rotated accounting for 67.6% of variance. These factors were clearly defined by the activist identity, group efficay, and individual benefits items.

Intentions. Finally at Time 1, intentions to engage in each of the five forms of collective action in the next four weeks was assessed on a scale from 1, *Not at all*, to 7, *Definitely intend to*. The ratings were averaged such that higher scores reflected stronger collective action intentions, α=.78.

Self-reported collective action. At Time 2, participants were asked, "In the last month, have you engaged in pro-peace / anti-war behaviours? Please tick all that apply." The five collective action behaviours from Time 1 were included and the number of ticks formed the score for this variable.

Time 2 overall goal achievement. Participants rated the success of the peace movement with a single item, "The peace movement overall has achieved its goals in the last four weeks," measured on a Likert scale from 1, *Strongly Disagree*, to 5, *Strongly Agree*.

Time 2 dimensions of goal achievement. Two more specific dimensions of movement success were also assessed, again using single-item measures on the same five-point scale. The first dimension (i.e., "The peace movement has influenced the government's position on the occupation & reconstruction of Iraq") reflected public articulations of the peace movement's current focus, in speeches, literature, and rallying cries. The second dimension reflected a more long-term and strategic sense of what needed to be achieved (i.e., "The peace movement has mobilized supporters")--something which

we would expect would hold more purchase with activists committed to the long-haul (see Hornsey et al., 2006).

Results

Descriptive Analyses

Table 1 presents the uncentred means, standard deviations, and inter-correlations for all variables involved in the analyses. At Time 1, activist identity, perceived group efficacy, benefits for the individual, and intentions, are all above the scale midpoints. At Time 2, a stronger activist identity is observed for the sub-sample of activists retained in the study. Self-reported behaviour and perceived achievement of goals for the previous month are relatively low. Of particular note, only Time 1 intentions correlate significantly with Time 2 self-reported behaviour.

Hierarchical regression analyses and structural equation modelling using AMOS 17 were used to address the hypotheses (See Tables 2 and 3 for summaries). Continuous variables were mean-centered before inclusion in the analyses and interaction terms were calculated as the product of these centred scores. Missing values were replaced with variable means.

Insert Table 1 here

Identification predicts intentions and behaviour directly and indirectly via group and individual-level processes

To test H1a we needed to first show that activist identity is associated with a heightened perception of the efficacy of collective action in achieving group goals and that this in turn is associated with a heightened perception that collective action provides benefits to the individual. In the first regression analysis, activist identity was associated with higher perceived group efficacy (β=.14, *p*=.004). In the second, activist identity was associated with higher perceived individual benefits (β=.22, *p*=.004) and, when entered at Step 2, so too was perceived group efficacy (β=.42, *p*=.001). Moreover, when we controlled for group efficacy, the direct effect of activist identity on individual benefits decreased (β=.16, *p*=.017). A Sobel test confirmed an indirect impact of identification on benefits to the individual via group efficacy, *z*=1.67, *p*=.046.

A third hierarchical regression analysis examined collective action intentions. When activist identity was entered at Step 1, group efficacy at Step 2, and individual benefits at Step 3, they were each associated with higher intentions to engage in collective action (βs=.32, .44, .15, *ps*<.001, .001, .029 respectively). This was as we would expect and consistent with the collective action literature. The important question was whether these were simply separate processes or whether (and how) they were linked. In support of our hypothesis, evidence was found for the latter. The entry of group efficacy at Step 2 produced a decrease in the direct effect of activist identity on collective action intentions (β=.26, *p*<.001) and a Sobel test confirmed a significant indirect effect of activist identity on collective action via group efficacy, *z*=1.68, *p*=.046. In a similar vein, the entry of individual benefits in the model at Step 3 produced a decrease in the direct effect of group efficacy on collective action (β=.38, *p*<.001) and a Sobel test confirmed a significant indirect effect of group efficacy on collective action via individual benefits, *z*=1.80, *p*=.036.

Finally, a fourth regression analysis predicting collective action behaviour at Time 2 from the Time 1 variables, was significant R^2 = .224, F = 4.47, p=.003. Only intentions, however, uniquely influenced Time 2 behaviour (β=.53, p<.001).

Insert Table 2

We were interested in whether a mediational model linking identity with the group-level and individual-level variables in their effects on activist intentions and behaviour would be better than the two alternative models (H1b). Using structural equation modelling in AMOS 17, we compared our mediational model with the independence model and with one specifying separate paths for individual costs and benefits to action and for identity to group efficacy to action. Our model fit the data well, χ^2 (4, N = 155) = 7.83, p = .098, and other indices also showed good fit: comparative fit index (CFI) = .959, incremental fit index (IFI) = .961, and goodness of fit index (GFI) = .980. Inspection of the 90% confidence interval (CI: Low = .000, High = .161) for the root mean square error of approximation statistic (RMSEA) =.079 suggested that based on the current sample, the model could not be disconfirmed (PCLOSE =.226). The alternative 'dual pathways' model provided very poor fit, χ^2 (5, N = 155) = 40.85, p < .001; comparative fit index (CFI) = .615, incremental fit index (IFI) = .634, goodness of fit index (GFI) = .912, and root mean square error of approximation statistic (RMSEA) =.216 with PCLOSE =.000. So too did the independence model, χ^2 (6, N = 155) = 44.01, p < .001; comparative fit index (CFI) = .591, incremental fit index (IFI) = .608, goodness of fit index (GFI) = .897, and root mean square error of approximation statistic (RMSEA) =.203 with PCLOSE =.000. Modification

indices suggested that including the covariance between activist identity and individual benefits (MI = 7.56, ParCh = .236) and between individual benefits and perceived group efficacy (MI = 29.72; ParCh = .741) would benefit the model. Finally, our model was found to provide significantly better fit to the data when compared with the two alternative models (χ^2 ch (1) = 33.02, $p < .05$; χ^2 ch (2) = 36.18, $p < .001$).

Insert Figure 4 here

Based on our theoretical argument for group-based concerns shaping personal-level concerns, we specified a path where activist identity shaped group efficacy beliefs which in turn shaped personal cost-benefit beliefs. We have also argued, however, that a politicized identity should directly shape how people experience and evaluate personal costs and benefits and what constitute beneficial actions for the group. This led us to consider an alternative model wherein beliefs about what forms of collective action are efficacious at a group level, reflect identity-informed personal level preferences. That is, one where activist identity shapes personal level benefits which in turn shape group efficacy beliefs. This model also provided excellent fit to the data, χ^2 (4, N = 155) = 7.35, $p = .196$, comparative fit index (CFI) = .975, incremental fit index (IFI) = .976, goodness of fit index (GFI) = .982, and root mean square error of approximation statistic (RMSEA) =.055 (PCLOSE =.384; CI: Low = .000, High = .134). In the case of this model, no modification indices were recommended.

Identification can affect what constitutes group success

Our second set of analyses tested the hypothesis that activist identification would shape the definitions of group success. The perception at Time 2 that the peace movement had achieved its overall goal was regressed onto activist identity (T1 & T2), the perceived efficacy of collective (group) action in achieving group goals (T1), and two alternative dimensions on which the group could be judged to have been successful or not (T2: mobilising supporters and influencing the government). This model accounted for significant variance in overall goal success, $F(5,59)=3.77$, $p=.005$, R^2 *ch.*$=.24$, but only the perception that the peace movement had influenced the government played a unique role ($\beta=.37$, $p=.004$); other $|\beta|$s$<.19$, *p*s$>.260$). Our main interest, however, was in whether this relationship would be moderated by the strength of activist identity.

Insert Table 3 and Figure 5 here

In Block 2, when the interactions of activist identity (T2) with each of the two dimensions of goal success were entered, the variance accounted for increased marginally, $F(2,57)=2.50$, $p=.091$, R^2 *ch.*$=.06$. Inspection of the coefficients revealed, unexpectedly, that high and low identifiers were equally unmoved by consideration of the movement's success in mobilising supporters in their ratings of overall goal success ($\beta=.08$, $p=.466$). However, there was a significant negative interaction of activist identity with perceptions that the government had been influenced ($\beta=-.26$, $p=.031$, see Figure 1). In support of H2a, simple slope analyses for one standard deviation above and below the identification mean, confirmed that influencing the government was weighted heavily by low identifiers in

judging the peace movement's overall achievement at Time 2 (β=.73, p<.001), whereas it was ignored by high identifiers (β=.12, p=.407).

Discussion

The present results address two key points. First, the data speak to group and individual-level processes involved in collective action as interlinked rather than operating simply in parallel. Second, the results suggest the importance of not presupposing what are the political goals of a specific collective action and concomitantly, how that collective action will be judged. After commenting on the implications, strengths, and limitations of the data, the implications for a broader research program on the outcomes of collective action are reviewed.

In the present data, collective action intentions were predicted by group identification, and as hypothesised, this relationship was partially mediated by perceptions of the efficacy of the collective action in achieving the goals of the group as well as perceptions of the benefits of action for the individual. Moreover, the model interlinking these processes was far superior to the two alternative models where these processes were treated separately. In sum, this research conducted with committed activists provided some support for our hypotheses as well as for central tenets of Van Zomeren and colleagues' (2008) SIMCA model, and Louis and colleagues' agentic model of collective action decision-making (2004, 2005). As with our model, these models specify a causal path from identity to group efficacy, and in Louis' case, personal cost-benefit analyses. However,

while there was some evidence for group efficacy beliefs shaping personal cost-benefit analyses, there was if anything stronger evidence for the reverse being the case.

One possible explanation relates to methodological limitations of this study. Although activist identity, group efficacy, and cost-benefit analyses were empirically distinguishable, what may have been in evidence was order effects with personal benefits measured before group efficacy. There is also the matter of our sample consisting of those who already have a poltical identity and so not allowing us to examine the processes of politicization whereby identity and attendant beliefs and concerns are transformed. There are strong grounds, both theoretical and drawn from ethnographic research, for arguing that the experience of collective action as efficacious can have deep and enduring consequences for the forms of collective action individuals value. With this in mind we do think future research examining this path is warranted. On reflection, however, we would expect this to be a two-way process, with people gravitating towards groups that engage in forms of collective action consistent with their values and proclivities. Or, indeed, through engaging in intra-group struggles to align the normative actions for the group with actions they find personally rewarding, being motivated to see these actions as more effective. In effect, this finding arguably supports Postmes and colleagues (2006) challenge to see personal and social identities as being both constrained and informed by each other (see also, Mavor et al., 2009).

We have argued that a corollary of the process of politicization whereby personal interests come to be understood in group terms is that once we are politicized, group interests will come to be understood in personal terms – what benefits us also benefits me. The key point of our findings is that these committed activists are not any less rational or

motivated by personal-level concerns than those who might not be driven by an activist identity, but rather that the basis for their reasoning differs. The data support our contention that it is misleading and a misrepresentation of a politicized identity when we use analytical strategies to model the processes as independent predictors and then accompany this standard regression with interpretations of the psychological processes involved as independent.

The present study also demonstrated some support for our hypothesis that the evaluation of collective action outcomes that may form the basis for judging the utility of involvement, is influenced by identity processes. We found that strength of activist identification at Time 2 moderated the relationship between one possible dimension on which to evaluate the success of collective action – influence on government decision-makers – and overall perceptions of the success of the movement. Consistent with our hypothesis, those less identified were sensitive to perceptions that the peace movement had failed to influence decision-makers, with this associated with lower ratings of overall group success. For high identifiers, perceptions of having influenced decision-makers was immaterial to their evaluation. Contrary to our expectations, based on previous research by Hornsey and colleagues (2006) where the motivation of committed activists was sustained by beliefs about building a long term oppositional movement, strength of activist identity did not moderate the effects of perceiving that the peace movement had effectively mobilised supporters on judgements about the movement's overall success. Regardless of strength of identification, there was a strong perception that the movement had in fact mobilised people suggesting possible ceiling effects. This evaluation, however, had no bearing on judgements of the movement's overall success. In the Hornsey study, it should

be borne in mind that the outcome of interest was intentions to engage in future collective actions, whereas ours was a global evaluation of the group's success. This was in the context of the peace movement's failure to achieve its stated objective which was to secure the government's withdrawal of troops from Iraq.

There are a number of ways of thinking about these results. One argument is that consistent with dual-pathway explanations of collective action, all our activists were so identified that by and large this overcame considerations of movement building, and for some, influence on government decision-making. We suggest, however, that it is more likely a consequence of our failure in this study to adequately capture what was important to these committed activists. Our sample of activists was by neccesity drawn from a wide range of political organizations, and by implication came to the actions with very different normative goals and expectations. Moreover, in the course of their participation as members of particular political organizations in these actions, their understanding of the purpose or goals of the actions may have changed (Lemaine, 1974; see also, Drury & Reicher, 2000, 2005; Drury et al., 2005).

In some respects, the fact that committed activists were motivated by long-term movement-building in one study, and not in a second, reinforces our point. Future research on this question must begin with an elicitation of contextually-relevant and group-normative dimensions on which activists judge the efficacy of their collective actions. The risk of not doing so is that in our research we may inadvertently sample efficacy perceptions for goals which activists do not value, artificially depressing the role of group efficacy in analyses predicting activists' future action intentions. In our research, we do show some differences as a function of level of activist identification. To our knowledge,

the present data represent the first longitudinal quantitative analysis, where we were able to control for T1 identity and beliefs about the efficacy of collective action for achieving political goals. To strengthen the case being made, future research would also need to measure at Time 1, the importance of the alternative dimensions of success and the contribution that the range of collective actions was expected to make to each of these.

We believe the data speak to identity-based processes shaping perceptions of the outcomes of collective action for the group and for the individual, including cost-benefit calculations implicit in efficacy perceptions and appraisals of success. What matters, however, is how we explain these relationships and their implications. It may simply be as we have suggested that identification leads to differences in what is normatively valued and seen as politically effective. Part of being a political activist is subscribing to a particular normative understanding of social structural relations and of the desirability and possibility of social change; activism entails some shared vision of an alternative future. This is expressed in models of the politicization of identity and the development of the constituent 'understanding' and 'agency' components (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001; see also Thomas et al., 2009). Thus, we might expect committed activists to have a long-term and strategic sense of the group's goals. For instance, for those who have been politicized, losing battles in anticipation of winning wars may have normative meaning. Indeed, identity may be forged in the heat of these sorts of struggles. There is considerable evidence for this in the industrial relations literature where 'David and Goliath' struggles such as those between low-paid workers and multi-national corporations have produced unification among workers, win or lose (Baccaro, Hamann, & Turner, 2003; Brodkin & Strathmann, 2004; Kloosterboer, 2007).

Alternatively, what we might be capturing in our research is a retrospective looking back—a reaction to defeat and the potential threat to identity which demands a rationalisation or re-framing of what's important to the group and by implication, to the self. According to this reading, if the peace movement had succeeded in influencing government leaders, high identifiers would have weighted this dimension more strongly in their global judgement of the group's overall success than they did in this instance. Indeed, qualitative data from a study conducted with an animal rights group bears this out (Einwohner, 2002). While being realistic about their failure in three of their four campaigns, members of the group emphasised positive aspects of these campaigns (e.g., provoking a response; getting people to think about the issue). In accordance with Derks and colleagues' (2007) recent research, such (re)framing might provide a buffer against the potentially de-motivating consequences of defeat for self-esteem and even produce greater exertion to overcome the odds.

The two explanations are not incommensurate but do suggest the kinds of questions that need to be pursued in future research—questions our present study did not set out to address. For instance, what might be important to investigate are the emotional and motivational psychological consequences of the evaluation of group outcomes on relative dimensions of both short-term and projected long-term success and failure. What also seems important to consider is the attrition we see in social movements which suggests that commitment in the face of defeat and personal sacrifice may not be sustainable indefinitely (see also Louis, 2008; Louis, 2009). Future research is called for – both in theory-development and in empirical data – to examine the group and individual-level consequences of collective action and understand the conditions under which

disidentification and demotivation are fostered (Louis, Terry, & Fielding, 2005) versus solidarity and empowerment (Drury & Reicher, 2000, 2005; Drury et al., 2005).

Collective action produces real material and psychological consequences at both the individual and the group level. Our participation in political actions may be experienced as entailing costs in personal time and resources; in being subject to victimization and repression; and in the crushing blow of collective defeat. With this in mind, Simon and Klandermans (2001) note that a politicized identity is not particularly attractive to most people. Conversely, however, in the process of being involved in political struggle, personal sacrifice of time and resources may be experienced as an affirmation of self-worth, and our solidarity in the face of defeat as a source of collective pride and achievement. Thus, rather than a dichotomy between individual cost-benefit calculations and social identity-based emotional or unconscious motives, in the context of our involvement in collective action the two become intertwined. Our understanding and our decisions will at least in part be based on the particular costs, benefits, and emotions that are the normative focus of the group within the context of a political struggle. More broadly, the present research suggests that engaging in action changes identities and beliefs about the consequences of the action. The demonstrated processes are consistent with the social identity approach. However, by providing quantitative longitudinal data concerning the outcomes of collective action, and by testing the hypothesis that identification would shape rather than act in parallel to group efficacy perceptions and perceptions of costs and benefits to the individual, the present data seek to make a novel contribution to the collective action literature and its ongoing theoretical debates.

End Notes

1. As well as the materials described here, participants completed a number of other measures related to political and social attitudes around the Iraq war and activism. Please contact the author for the full questionnaire and dataset. Summaries of the studies' results were also distributed to the participants. These are available on the second author's web site.

Acknowledgements

The authors are grateful to Steve Reicher for his comments on an earlier version of this article. We are also grateful to four anonymous reviewers for their care in reviewing this paper.

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Table 1.

Uncentred means, standard deviations (SD), and inter-correlations.

	M	*SD*	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
1. Time 1 ID (1-5)	3.86	0.88								
2. T1 Group efficacy (1-7)	4.57	1.40	.14†							
3. T1 Benefits to Individual (1-7)	4.80	1.28	.22**	.45***						
4. T1 Intentions (1-7)	4.85	1.56	.32***	.47***	.37***					
5. T2 Reported Collective Action (RCA) (0-5)	1.86	1.41	.01	.01	-.00	.39**				
6. T2 ID (1-5)	4.01	0.81	.71***	.04	.11	.35**	.18			
7. T2 Effectiveness: Mobilised (EM) (1-5)	2.76	0.98	.07	.14	.12	.24*	.18	.07		
8. T2 Effectiveness: Influenced gov't (EI) (1-5)	2.11	1.16	.19	.23†	.08	.07	.17	.01	.25*	
9. T2 Overall Achievement (1-5)	2.28	0.92	.20†	.10	.04	-.05	.14	-.03	.15	.39**

*** $p < .001$ ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$ † $p < .10$

Table 2.

Direct and indirect effects of identification on collective action intentions at time 1.

Predictor	Group Efficacy	Individual Benefits		Time 1 Intentions		
	B	Block 1	Block 2	Block 1	Block 2	Block 3
T1 Identification	.14*	.22**	.16*	.32***	.26***	.23**
T1 Group Efficacy	--		.42***		.44***	.38***
T1 Individual Benefits						.15*
R^2 change	.02*	.05**	.18***	.10***	.19***	.02*

*** $p < .001$ ** $p < .01$ * $p < .05$ † $p < .10$

Table 3

T2 Identification moderating success of mobilizing support and influencing government as predictors of overall peace movement success.

					Block 1	Block 2
Step	Variable	R^2	R^2ch	Fch	β	β
1	T1 Identity				.22	.19
	T2 Identity				-.18	-.13
	T1 Group Efficacy				.05	.00
	T2 Mobilizing				.11	.11
	T2 Influencing Govt	.24	.24	3.77^{**}	$.37^{**}$	$.43^{**}$
2	T2 Identity X Mobilizing					.08
	T2 Identity X Influencing Govt	.30	.06	2.50^{+}		$-.26^{*}$

$^{+}p < .10$, $^{*}p < .05$, $^{**}p < .01$, $^{***}p < .001$

FIGURE CAPTIONS

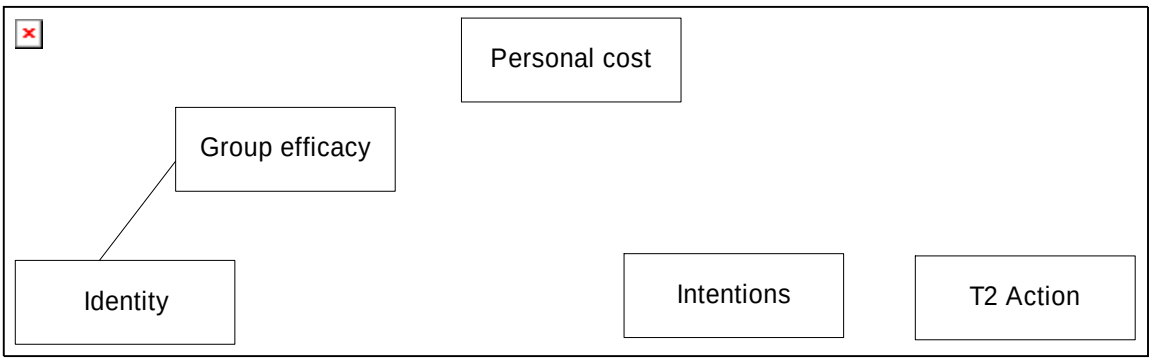
Figure 1. *Predicted model of collective action.*

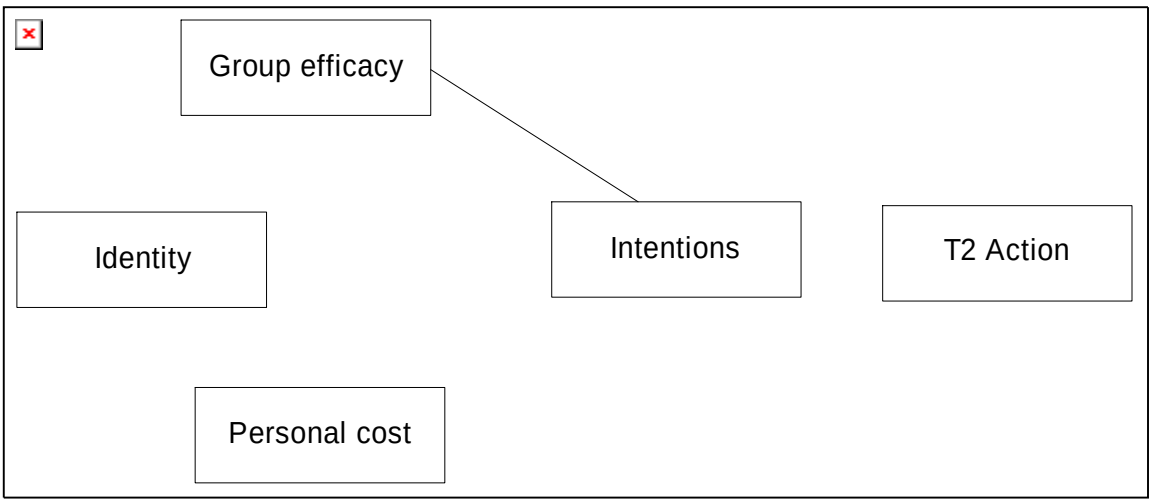
Figure 2. *Alternative independence model.*

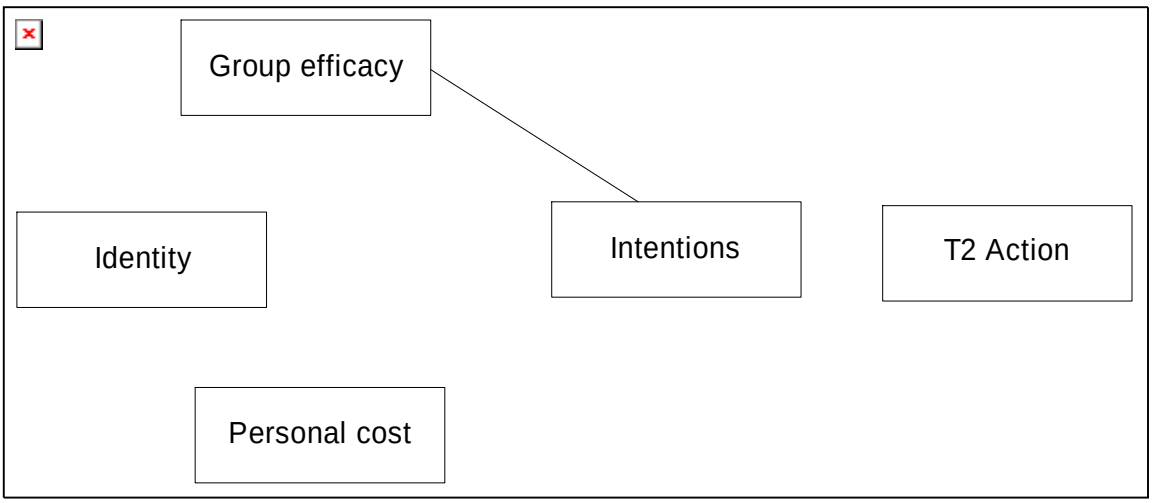
Figure 3. *Alternative dual-process model.*

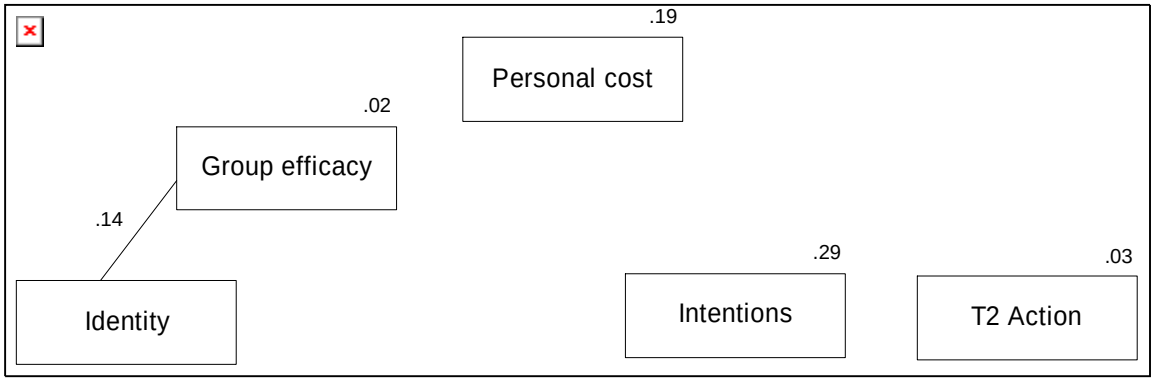
Figure 4. *Predicted model of collective action.*

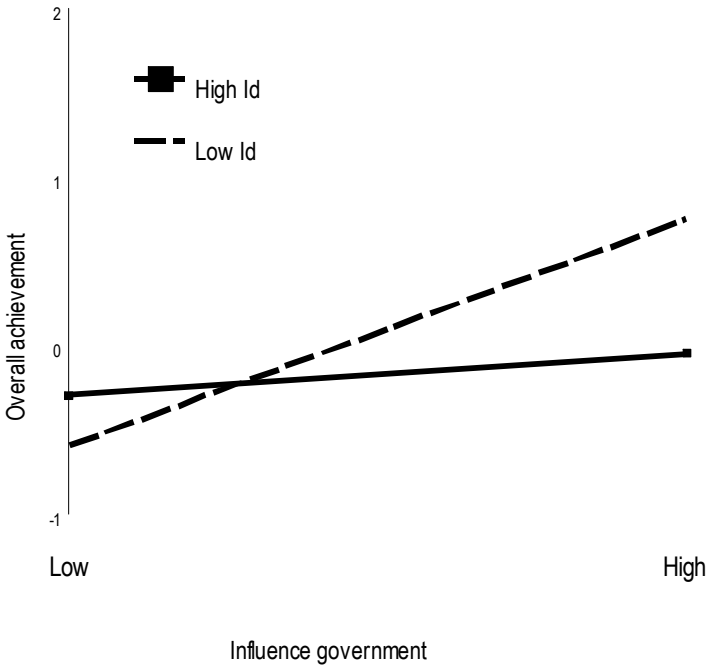
Figure 5. *Interaction between activist identity and perceived influence on government on perceived overall achievement.*


Personal cost
Group efficacy
Identity
Intentions
T2 Action


Group efficacy
Identity
Intentions
T2 Action
Personal cost


Group efficacy
Identity
Intentions
T2 Action
Personal cost


.19
Personal cost
.02
Group efficacy
.14
Identity
.29
Intentions
.03
T2 Action


2
1
0
-1
High Id
Low Id
Overall achievement
Low
High
Influence government